

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A playback apparatus for playing content data, comprising:

5 providing means for providing not only the content data but also provision date information and playback-permitted period information; and

playback means for playing the content data on the basis of the information provided by the providing means.

10 2. A playback apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a date memory that stores provision date information representing a latest value provided by the providing means.

15 3. A playback apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a medium holder for detachably holding a recording medium which is externally provided; and

20 recording means for recording provision date information and playback-permitted period information along with the content data, in the recording medium held by the medium holder.

4. A playback apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising:

25 a medium holder for detachably holding a recording medium which is externally provided; and

recording means for recording provision date

10022769.122001

information and playback-permitted period information along with the content data, in the recording medium held by the medium holder.

5. A playback apparatus according to claim 2,
5 wherein said playback means plays the content data when the provision date information stored in the date memory corresponds to the playback-permitted period information.

6. A playback apparatus according to claim 5,
10 wherein said playback-permitted period information represents an end date of a playback-permitted date and/or a start date thereof.

7. A recording medium storing content data
beforehand and being readable by a computer, said
15 recording medium comprising:

provision-date information checked by the computer
and determined to be latest or not, said provision date
information being held in the computer when the
provision date information is determined to be latest;

20 and

playback-permitted period information which is
checked by the computer to determine whether or not a
period corresponding to a latest value of the provision
date information is satisfied, and which enables
25 playback of the content data when said period is
satisfied.

8. A producing method for producing a recording

10022769.122001

medium described in claim 7, said producing method comprising:

preparing an unused-state recording medium which can be subjected to recording only once; and

- 5 recording the provision date information and the playback-permitted period information in the unused-state recording medium along with the content data.

10022769.122001